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15 May 1964

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# **CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN**

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\*South Vietnam: Differences with General Khanh appear to be breeding pessimism among his civilian ministers. ✓

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Deputy Prime Minister Hoan and his principal aide complained again on 12 May that Khanh was by-passing Hoan in naming members of the Pacification Committee, and had failed to provide authority for provincial administrative appointments. They said Khanh had personally stopped Hoan's weekly radio-broadcasts which could have explained the government's mobilization order and helped overcome the difficulties of recruiting personnel for the regular and paramilitary forces. ✓

While lack of clear progress in the war effort may be a factor in these attitudes, civilian politicians in the government are also aware of Khanh's desire to hold their personal political ambitions in check. Hoan's radiobroadcasts, for example, had seemingly tried to enhance his own image rather than explain government policies.

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Khanh is urging some political and religious leaders not to participate in the United Political Front which Hoan intends shortly to proclaim. ✓

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East Germany: Ulbricht has moved to adjust his policies in an effort to reduce East Germany's political differences with Eastern Europe.

In a joint communiqué at the end of his six-day visit to Hungary, Ulbricht abandoned his previous stand against current economic agreements between the Eastern European countries and West Germany. However, his continued opposition to including West Berlin in West Germany's "currency area" was still implied.

Ulbricht softened his advocacy of multilateral planning and centralized control by CEMA of the Soviet bloc economies, to meet the insistence of other East European countries that bilateral agreements and national economic interests have a validity of their own. In conjunction with Kadar's first public endorsement of an international Communist conference to discuss "unity" with the Chinese, Ulbricht also adjusted his hard anti-Peiping position to one more closely approximating that of most other East European leaders, for whom an open Sino-Soviet break would pose grave problems.

These shifts in Ulbricht's positions will create confusion within the East German party and will probably sharpen the dissatisfaction of hard-line party members who already object to what they regard as Ulbricht's truckling to Moscow's "flexible" policy in central Europe.

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\*Cyprus: The interest of NATO Secretary General Dirk Stikker in conciliating differences between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus may lead to some easing of tensions.

Stikker's role will be limited to using his good offices to keep the crisis from becoming more acute.

The Greek and Turkish foreign ministers, who have been attending the NATO Ministerial Conference at the Hague, meanwhile have agreed to hold further bilateral discussions before returning home. Neither Athens nor Ankara shows any inclination toward real compromise.

In Cyprus, fighting broke out yesterday in a village southwest of Nicosia, and the Greek Cypriots continue to take Turkish hostages.

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Gabon: A strike in Libreville may develop into a move to oust unpopular pro-French President Leon Mba.

The strike was begun on 9 May by dock workers seeking a pay increase. It has now spread to other workers and has closed down most businesses in the capital. The US Embassy reports that although the strikers' objectives are economic, the strike has already taken on political overtones and could easily turn into an antigovernment demonstration unless it is settled quickly.

Local French businessmen, who play a strong role in Gabonese politics, have reportedly advised Mba against any sizable wage increase.

Mba's position depends primarily upon the 350-400 French troops stationed in Gabon. The French reinstated him after his ouster last February and have suppressed other antigovernment demonstrations since then. The French troops and the Gabonese police and gendarmerie are patrolling in Libreville. Thus far no violence has been reported.

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Panama: Arnulfo Arias may have some grounds for contesting Marco Robles' election as president of Panama in last Sunday's election.

[redacted] the US Embassy indicates that the figures released piecemeal this week by the electoral tribunal do not jibe with those reported from precinct election boards. [redacted] the precinct figures--which are presumably available to all nineteen parties that took part in the election--give Arnulfo Arias more votes than the public had been led to believe, and Robles less.

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The embassy comments that it now remains to be seen whether the government can make Robles' victory "stick." Its most immediate test is to reconcile the "unofficial" returns with the official vote count that is due to begin tomorrow.

The embassy also notes that while it is not clear whether the Arias forces are as yet aware of the degree to which the voting figures have been juggled, they are still claiming victory and charging the government with fraud.

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NOTES

Communist China - USSR: The 1964 Sino-Soviet trade agreement was signed on 13 May in Peiping after bitter and acrimonious negotiations which began in January. Although the announcement gave no details, recent Chinese and Soviet statements suggest that trade will drop to a new low in 1964 from last year's estimated \$600 to \$650 million. Chinese exports will again exceed purchases from the USSR, probably by about \$200 million in order to allow for further reduction of Peiping's debt to Moscow, leaving a small balance which the Chinese say will be discharged in 1965.

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